

Disability Etiquette and You

Fear of the unknown and lack of knowledge about how to act can lead to uneasiness when meeting a person with a disability. When supervisors and co-workers use “disability etiquette,” employees with disabilities feel more comfortable and work more productively. Disability etiquette is a broad subject with history and research to support it. Here are some etiquette tips you might find helpful; don’t automatically give assistance to a disabled person but instead ask first if the person wants help; when walking with a person who is using a guide dog, walk on the side of the person opposite the dog. To learn more about disability etiquette, download a disability etiquette guide at www.unitedspinal.org.



Men—Eat More Veggies!

The federal government has designated September as “Fruits and Veggies Matter Month.” This is a good opportunity to start learning more about improving your diet. Research shows that men are more at risk for cardiovascular disease, stroke, and certain kinds of cancers because of poor dietary practices that skimp on vegetable intake. Try to incorporate the following foods into your diet; asparagus, broccoli, peas, tomatoes. These foods contain cancer-fighting elements in addition to building muscle strength.



Source: <http://www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov>

School’s Begun! How’s It Going?

With school in full swing, consider these tips to help keep things moving in a positive direction. Have a small back-to-school party to help your child bond with new friends. Get the e-mailed updates, new rules, or schedules that may have been lost in your SPAM folder last month. Routinely ask your child about homework and relationships at school. Don’t wait for problems to come to your attention because almost always needed intervention is more difficult if it’s delayed.



Harassed, but Not Telling?

Are you being harassed at work, picked on, or bullied, but staying silent about it? It’s important to speak up. Say “no” and ask the person to stop the unwanted behavior. Don’t hesitate to ask for help from a person who can assist you—human resources, your EAP, your supervisor, the next level manager, or even a good friend. Suffering in silence is a recipe for building frustration, anger, and resentment. Your agency wants you to be happy at work.



Surrendering to Social Websites



Has a website like Facebook become critical to your self-esteem? Are you anxious and frustrated if you can't get online? If you are "defriended," do you experience a grief reaction? If "logging on" is more important than reaching the bathroom first thing in the morning, or if not getting an electronic birthday card has you feeling depressed, consider your use of the computer and its role in your life. Social media sites are fascinating tools, but for many people they have become the primary means of interacting with others. It is easy to slip into compulsive use and rob yourself of time, productivity, and the benefits of socializing with people face-to-face. Computer addiction is not only about online gambling, pornography, or compulsive shopping. It is about being overtaken by the Internet, feeling defined by it, and feeling inadequate without this activity being part of your life. Social websites are tools. But compulsive use can rob you of a more fulfilling life.

You Can Stop the Bickering



It's normal to disagree or argue with those we care about or love, but chronic bickering can lead to feelings of resentment, which can fuel meanness in communication and a cycle of unhappiness. The harm in bickering lies in resentments that can slowly undermine love and respect, the driving forces that brought you together. Bickering locks you into a battle, the goal of which is getting your partner to admit defeat. You're on the same team, so interrupt this pattern. Agree to make the bickering your common enemy. To intervene, learn how to observe your behavior as bickering begins. Once it starts, pull back from the immediate squabble. Decide to let go of your desire to dominate your partner. Instead, find the middle ground with negotiating skills. You may discover that you can only agree to disagree; however, detaching from the emotionality—an almost trancelike state for many couples—is key. You may not have a command of negotiating skills, but these principles are easily learned. Don't fear or rule out a few sessions of professional counseling to speed your progress.

Is Alcohol Making the Rules?



If you are trying to reduce drinking-related problems by creating guidelines and restrictions to control your consumption, consider a professional assessment to rule out alcoholism. In the course of the illness, it is not uncommon for alcoholics to experiment with rules that they hope will prove or demonstrate that they are still "in control" of alcohol. This process is a natural part of denial. These rules may include vows to never drink until after a certain time of day (e.g., 5 p.m.), avoiding types of alcoholic beverages that have caused "problems" in the past, enlisting help from others to count drinks at social events, or planning abstinent periods ("going on the wagon") at specific times during the year. Drinking from smaller glasses may also be attempted. None of these practices demonstrate control over alcohol. They are indicators of loss of control, a key symptom of the disease.

Do You Have Social Anxiety Disorder?



Do you experience intense anxiety, have a pounding heart, sweat, shake, or even get an upset stomach at the thought of attending certain social events? Unexpected casual gatherings of coworkers where social competence is a must, giving a presentation, or suddenly finding oneself the center of attention can bring about debilitating anxiety for some. These are signs of a possible social anxiety disorder. Social Anxiety Disorder is not shyness. It is associated with fear of being watched, being criticized, and others having negative opinions of you. Don't let this condition disrupt your quality of life and relationships with others. A counselor or your EAP can help you find resources to help you with this very treatable and common condition.